

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-3 and 5-31 are pending in this application. Claims 1, 21, 23, 26, 27, 29 and 31 have been amended. Support for the amendments may be found in the specification as originally filed, for example, the Examples. See pages 35-37 and 12.

**I. The Rejection Based on Ishibashi et al. in view of Kanda et al.**

Claims 1-3 and 5-31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Ishibashi et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,579,657) in view of Forsberg et al. (4,661,275 or 4,749,500) or Markovich et al. (5,055,342).

The Examiner cites Forsberg et al and Markovich et al as teaching resin combinations that employ non-ionic surfactants such as Triton X-100, an octylphenol ethoxylate. Applicants have amended the independent claims to recite the surfactants of the specific examples. Applicants respectfully submit that picking the claimed surfactants together with the other components in the claimed resist pattern thickening material would not have been obvious to one skilled in the art.

Applicants' unexpected improvements are also not expected from the cited art.

For the above reasons, it is respectfully submitted that the subject matter of claims 1-3 and 5-31 is neither taught by nor made obvious from the disclosures of Ishabashi et al in view of Frosberg et al or Markovich et al and it is requested that the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) be reconsidered and withdrawn.

**II. Conclusion**

In view of the above, Applicants respectfully submit that their claimed invention is allowable and ask that the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103 be reconsidered and withdrawn. Applicants respectfully submit that this case is in condition for allowance and allowance is respectfully solicited.

If any points remain at issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the local exchange number listed below.

If this paper is not timely filed, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. The fees for such an extension or any other fees that may be due with respect to this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-2866.

Respectfully submitted,

**WESTERMAN, HATTORI, DANIELS & ADRIAN, LLP**



Lee C. Wright  
Attorney for Applicants  
Registration No. 41,441  
Telephone: (202) 822-1100  
Facsimile: (202) 822-1111

LCW/af